

# Standard Formatting Requirements for Recording Documents

(Pursuant to RCW 36.18.010 and 65.04.045)

Beginning 1/1/1997 all documents submitted for recording in the State of Washington must conform to standards required by RCW 36.18 and 65.04. A cover sheet is required for documents that do not contain the necessary index fields or margins on the 1<sup>st</sup> page.

**For Documents signed after 1996, all pages must have a 1" clear border in order to use a cover sheet.**

1) **ALL PAGES:**

- a) Documents submitted for recording must be able to be digitally scanned and reproduce a legible copy, including notary seals (raised notary seals must be smudged prior to recording). **Documents that contain illegible portions will not be accepted for recording.**
- b) Nothing may be affixed to pages (no item can be taped, stapled, etc. – no cut and paste)
- c) Page must be 8 ½" x 14" or less
- d) Font size must be at least 8-point (This is 8-point type)
- e) Paper and ink color must be **capable of being imaged**. Watch for color of highlighting, some colors copy dark, obscuring text. *Dot-matrix printers generally produce unacceptable results.*

2) **MARGINS:**

- a) 1<sup>st</sup> page 3" top margin, 1" sides and bottom margin – or 1" on all sides with a cover sheet.
  - i) Return address shall be in the 3" top margin
- b) Subsequent pages of same document must have 1" margin on all sides
- c) *Incidental* writing and notary seals in margins are allowed.

3) **FIRST PAGE:**

- a) Title
- b) Reference # for assignments and releases
- c) Grantor(s) and Grantee(s)
- d) Legal description (not needed on assignments, releases, etc.)
- e) Tax parcel ID# required if there is a legal description (not needed on assignments, releases, etc.).

4) Certified copies of previously recorded or filed documents may be recorded with a completed cover sheet.

5) **EXCEPTIONS:**

- a) The following exceptions for formatting standards can be recorded without a cover sheet:
  - i) IRS Tax Liens and releases
  - ii) UCC terminations in which the original UCC fixture filing was completed prior to January 1, 1997 and the termination statement is on the fixture filing
  - iii) Documents previously recorded (in any recording office) may have recording information in the margins.
- b) The following exceptions for formatting standards can be recorded with a properly completed cover sheet:
  - i) Documents which are formatted to meet court requirements (filed documents)
  - ii) death certificates
  - iii) documents signed prior to 1997
  - iv) military discharges
  - v) court documents
  - vi) National UCC Forms

RCW 65.04.048 allows recording of nonstandard documents for an additional fee of **\$50.00**. "Nonstandard" refers to documents that do not meet margin and format requirements. The legislation does not include recording of documents that do not meet legibility requirements. Those documents submitted for recording that are not legible as defined RCW 65.04.015 will not be accepted for recording under any circumstances. All nonstandard documents must have a **cover sheet** which meets 1<sup>st</sup> page margin requirements and contain a statement signed by the requester to read substantially as follows: **"I am requesting an emergency nonstandard recording for an additional fee as provided in RCW 36.18.010. I understand that the recording processing requirements may cover up or otherwise obscure some part of the text of the original document."**